

VARIATIONS ON A THEME OF EMERGENCY SCAMS

A popular variation of an "Emergency Scam" is the "Grandparent Scam," where a young person poses as a grandchild, or a friend of the grandchild who is supposed to need immediate help. The grandparent will receive a frantic call that the child has been injured, or is stranded, or maybe even in jail and needs bond money to come home. The grandparents are asked to wire money to an account to help their grandchild.

Another variation is the "Relationship Scam," where a person gains the victim's trust through emails, phone calls, and/or mail, and the victim believes he or she has developed a relationship with the scammer. Everything seems to be going great, but the couple hasn't been able to meet yet for any variety of reasons (distance, military deployment, work travel, etc.). Suddenly the online love interest has an emergency and needs money, which the victim is asked to wire.

In both cases, the scammer reports an emergency and needs the victim to wire money. The scammer will then continue to find more reasons to ask for money until the victim's funds have run out, or the victim wises up.

Mississippi Attorney General's Office Consumer Protection Division 2013